

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6298

C O N F I D E N T I A L VALLETTA 0831

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MT

SUBJ: MINTOFF'S DESIRE TO MEET WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER
IN HELSINKI

REF: VALLETTA 0573

1. GOM'S ROVING AMBASSADOR JOSEPH ATTARD KINGSWELL, WHO HEADED MALTA'S DELEGATION AT CSCE TALKS IN GENEVA, TOLD ME JULY 23 THAT MINTOFF, AFTER SOME INITIAL HESITATION, WAS LIKELY TO GO TO HELSINKI FOR CSCE SUMMIT AFTER ALL. ATTARD KINGSWELL NOTED THAT BOTH PRESIDENT FORD AND SECRETARY KISSINGER WOULD ALSO BE THERE AND SAID THAT THE HELSINKI MEETING WOULD BE AN "IDEAL TIME" FOR MINTOFF TO MEET WITH THE SECRETARY AND, IF POSSIBLE, PRESIDENT FORD AS WELL.

2. ATTARD KINGSWELL SAID HE HAD NOT YET DISCUSSED THE POSSIBILITY WITH MINTOFF, FEARING HIS REACTION IF A FORMAL REQUEST FOR SUCH A MEETING WAS TURNED DOWN BY US. ATTARD KINGSWELL REMINDED ME, UNNECESSARILY, OF MINTOFF'S BURNING DESIRE TO MEET THE SECRETARY AND OF THE STANDING INVITATION FOR HIM TO VISIT MALTA ON ONE OF HIS TRIPS IN THIS AREA. THE FACT THAT SUCH A VISIT HAS NEVER MATERIALIZED, PLUS THE FACT THAT MINTOFF HAS NEVER MET THE SECRETARY, LOOMS VERY LARGE IN MINTOFF'S MIND AND IS A SOURCE OF INCREASING IRRITATION TO HIM.

3. I TOLD ATTARD KINGSWELL THAT I HAD NO IDEA OF THE
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SCHEDULES OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY IN HELSINKI

OR WHETHER THE BRIEF TIME AVAILABLE THERE WOULD PERMIT SUCH BILATERAL MEETINGS WHEN SOME 35 HEADS OF STATES OR GOVERNMENTS WILL BE PRESENT. I SAID I WOULD CHECK WITH WASHINGTON TO SEE WHAT THE PROSPECTS WERE, HOWEVER.

4. COMMENT: AS REFTTEL INDICATES, THE PRIME MINISTER'S IMMEDIATE SUBORDINATES ARE PUSHING THIS MORE AND MORE STRONGLY, AND MY OWN CONVERSATIONS WITH MINTOFF HAVE CONFIRMED THAT HE ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE TO MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY--ALMOST TO THE POINT OF BECOMING AN OBSESSION WITH HIM. THIS DESIRE IS NOT GOING TO DISAPPEAR BUT RATHER WILL INCREASE WITH EVERY PASSING DAY. ON BALANCE, THEREFORE, I BELIEVE THAT IF THE SECRETARY'S SCHEDULE IN HELSINKI PERMITS, A BRIEF MEETING WITH MINTOFF WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL, CERTAINLY TO THIS EMBASSY, AND POSSIBLY EVEN OF USE TO US IN BROADER TERMS IN THE FUTURE. WE HAVE STALLED MINTOFF FOR OVER FOUR YEARS, AND FOR THE SECRETARY TO RECEIVE HIM BRIEFLY IN HELSINKI WOULD GO A LONG WAY TOWARD MOLLIFYING HIM.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: PLEASE ADVISE HOW I SHOULD HANDLE RESPONSE TO ATTARD KINGSWELL.SMITH

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NNN

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